

Learn  
to  
play

the

tin whistle

With  
ARMAGH PIPERS CLUB



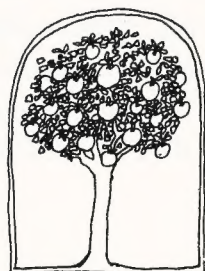
Part 2

30p









## LEARN TO PLAY THE TIN-WHISTLE

Music Transcriptions Eithne Vallely

Introduction John B. Vallely

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## INTRODUCTION

### **The Oral Tradition**

The transmission of the oral tradition (i.e. traditional Irish music) in Ireland has been a matter of chance for far too long. It still is a subject largely ignored by schools, with their inferiority-orientated reliance on obscure music written for recorder and piano. Even the ballad revival of the last decade has left our schools' syllabus unscathed. When we come to the traditional music itself, we find total ignorance of even the instruments used to produce that music. It is possible to go through school without ever seeing a set of Uilleann Pipes never mind hearing them.

Yet despite this 'ban' on our traditional music, (what else can you call a state-subsidized policy of ignoring its existence?) the musical tradition has survived over a wide area of the country - survived, where the very language of the people died, - survived even mass emigration, because the countries to which the people went recognised their talents, and their music came back on records. It still comes back - the only L.P. of Willie Clancy's music ever produced was by an English company - Topic Records Ltd.

### **A Great Loss.**

This explains one aspect of what we mean by our opening remark that the survival of the music has largely been a matter of chance. Death can end the strongest source of traditional lore, and in the last year we have lost Felix Doran and Willie Clancy, two of the greatest pipers of our time. Not so long ago, Leo Rowsome died.

### **Opportunists.**

However much they may shun it socially, traditional Irish music has often been used as a source by 'trained' musicians in search of a catchy melody to play around with, and very often, a plundered and emasculated version does find its way into the school syllabus. This being the case, why not the superior original?

### **The Pipers' Club.**

The Pipers' Club has attempted in Armagh to remove the chance element and provide the means by which the music will survive. Our basic instrument is the tin whistle, economically within everyone's range.

### **Ornamentation.**

Book 1 was mainly concerned with the mechanics of finding the notes and producing a simple tune. With this second book we are beyond the stage where the main concern is to mechanically produce a tune. We are at the stage where our ear tells us that there is something else in a tune as played by a traditional player, and where we are technically capable of reproducing that 'something else'.

The 'something else' is of course ornamentation. It is this ornamentation that gives the flavour to traditional music and distinguishes it from all other.

In the introduction to Book 1, we mentioned the sort of involuntary ornamentation that comes naturally. The instinctive ornamentation referred to comes when one rapidly alternates a given note with the note above. In traditional ornamentation one adds to this by playing the note below. The scheme laid out overleaf shows how this is done in theory. In practise, it will only work when made an integral part of a given tune.

We have selected tunes that feature ornamentation on various notes and our method is to learn the ornamentation in the context of the tune. Listen to a good player; identify the main ornamented notes; study the ornamentation chart, and then, using both sources, it will only be a matter of time and practise till a smooth natural performance is achieved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Micheal O hEidhin B. Mus.  
Arts Council of N.I.



While this is the main aspect we are concerned with in ornamentation, it is not the only one. A careful listening to of any traditional players performance will quickly make one conscious of many touches that add colour and interest where least expected. One has only to think of Miko Russell from Doolin, Co. Clare, to hear the short notes stopped in mid-air, that are a feature of his playing; or Willie Clancy's playing with its profusion of ornamentation varied with his characteristic long sliding notes.

In the Pipers' Club classes, we try to overcome the difficulty of travelling all over the country to hear such players by making tapes and records available for listening to and by organizing frequent music sessions outside of class time, when our pupils can play and hear some of our good senior players.

### **Conclusion**

The art of harping died out two centuries ago 'by chance'. The Harp had always been a feature of life in Ireland. By the time people realized what was happening at the end of the 18th century, it was already lost and two thousand years' tradition with it. It died from the combined effects of state suppression, a changing economic pattern of life and plain thoughtlessness. Much of our music dates from the period of the decline of the Harp.

Due to the efforts of various organizations over the last twenty years, traditional music is very popular, and yet, to listen to the radio and watch T.V., it is very much a fringe event in the world of canned entertainment. The tendency is towards more, rather than less canned entertainment.

The Pipers' Club sees its function on a local level as providing the facilities and the means through which traditional music will survive, not just by chance, but will survive because we want it to and are prepared to work for it.



# ORNAMENTATION

WRITTEN		PLAYED		WRITTEN		PLAYED	

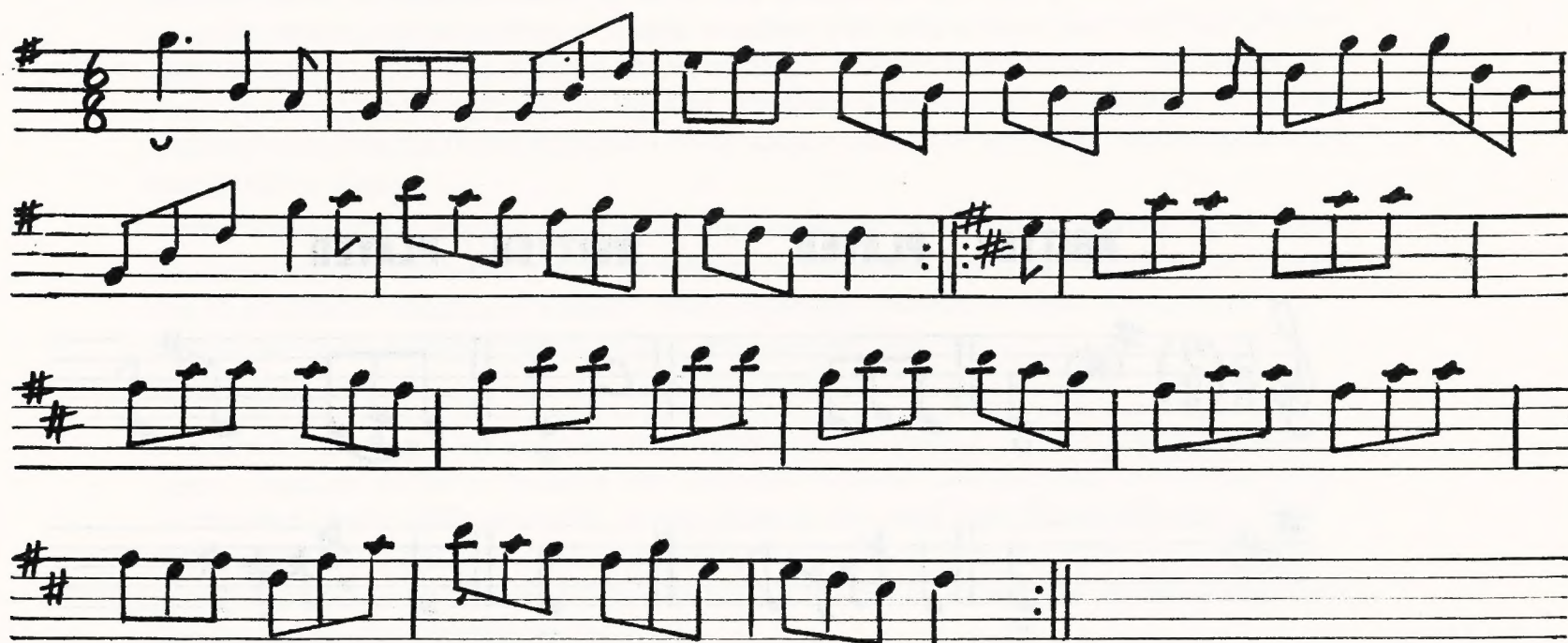
THIS SCHEME WILL GIVE THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF IRISH ORNAMENTATION . THE ALMOST ENDLESS VARIATIONS AND NUANCES WILL ONLY BE ACQUIRED THROUGH LISTENING TO AND WATCHING GREAT PLAYERS .



# ROTA JIGS

## Gillian's Apples

1



## Legacy Jig

2



## Trip to Sligo

3





## Tell Her I Am

4



## Cook In The Kitchen

5





**Paidin O Raifeartaigh**

**6**

Musical score for 'Paidin O Raifeartaigh' in D major (two sharps) and 6/8 time. The score consists of six staves. The first staff contains the first line of music. The second staff contains the second line, with first and second endings marked '1.' and '2.' respectively. The third staff contains the third line. The fourth staff contains the fourth line, also with first and second endings marked '1.' and '2.'. The fifth staff contains the fifth line. The sixth staff contains the sixth line, ending with a double bar line and repeat dots.

**Paddy OBrien's**

**7**

Musical score for 'Paddy OBrien's' in D major (two sharps) and 6/8 time. The score consists of five staves. The first staff contains the first line of music. The second staff contains the second line. The third staff contains the third line. The fourth staff contains the fourth line. The fifth staff contains the fifth line, ending with a double bar line and repeat dots.



## Micky O'Callaghan's

8



## Walls Of Liscarroll

9





## Slip Jigs

### Port An Deoraí

10



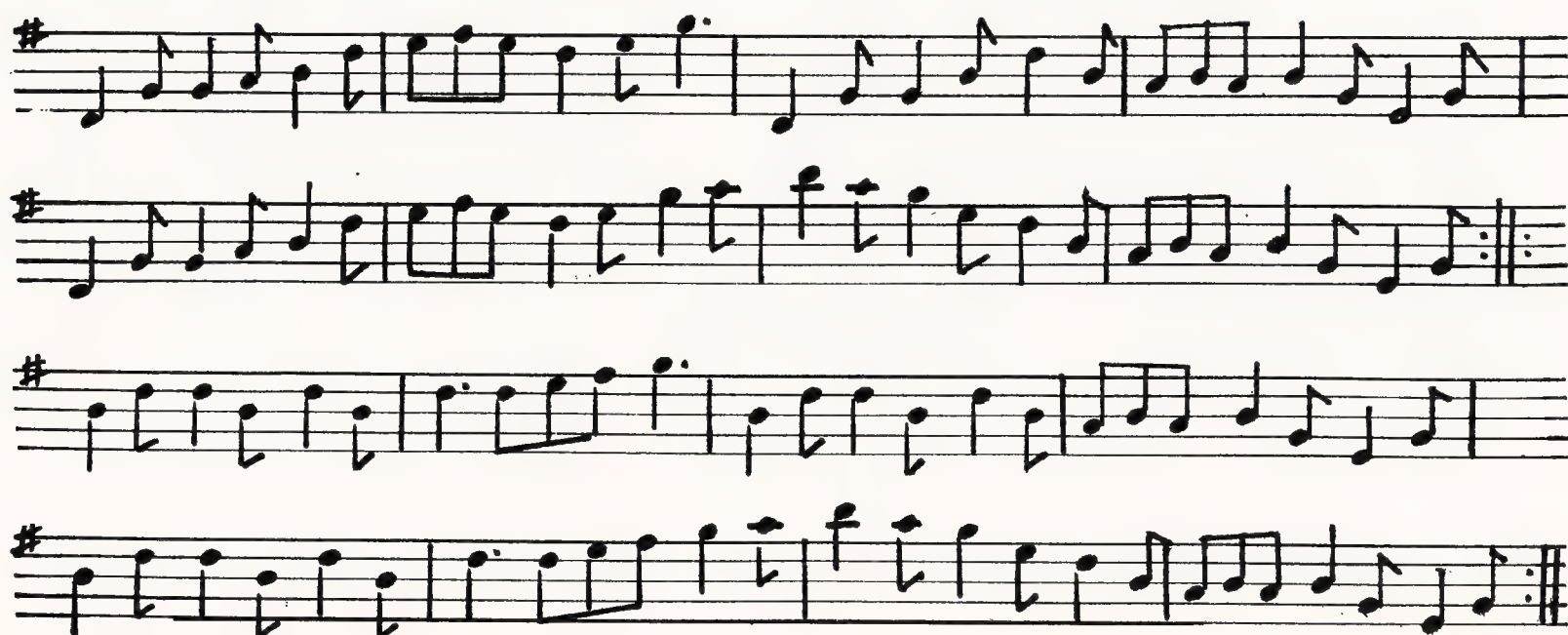
### Comb Your Hair And Curl It

11



### Boys Of Ballisodare

12

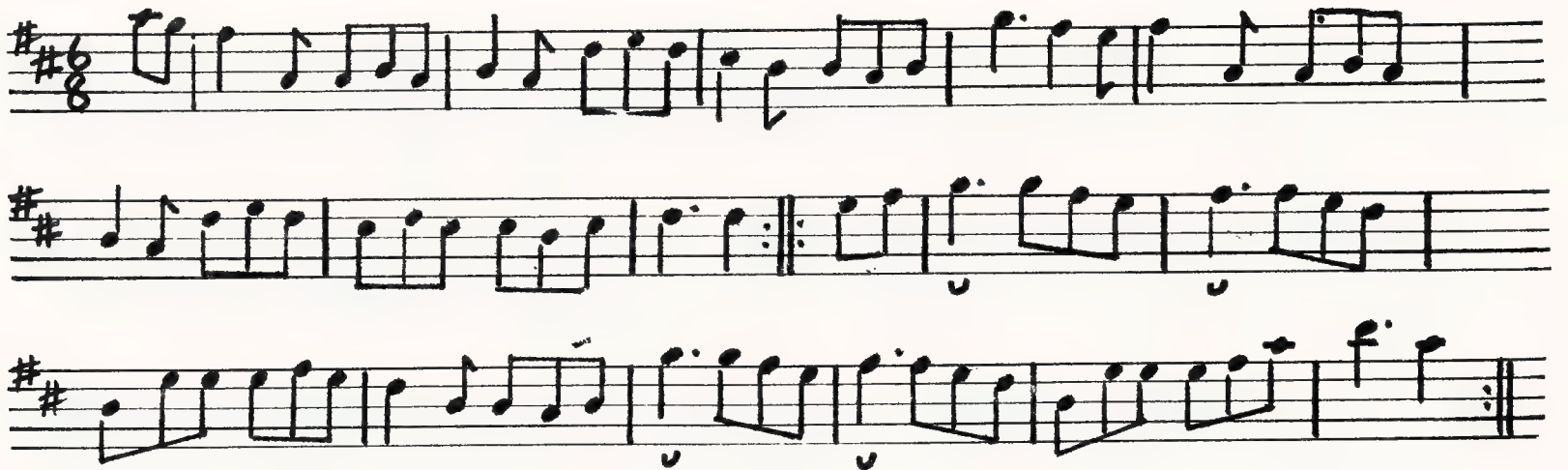




## SLIDES

**John Kelly's**

**13**



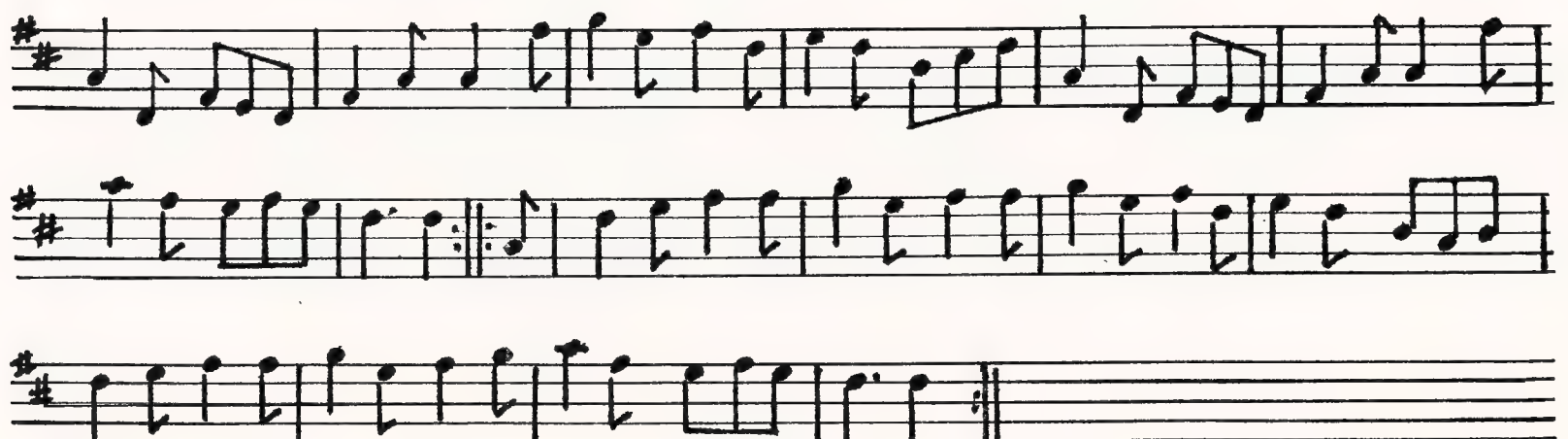
**Merrily Kiss The Quaker's Wife**

**14**



**Denis Murphy's**

**15**

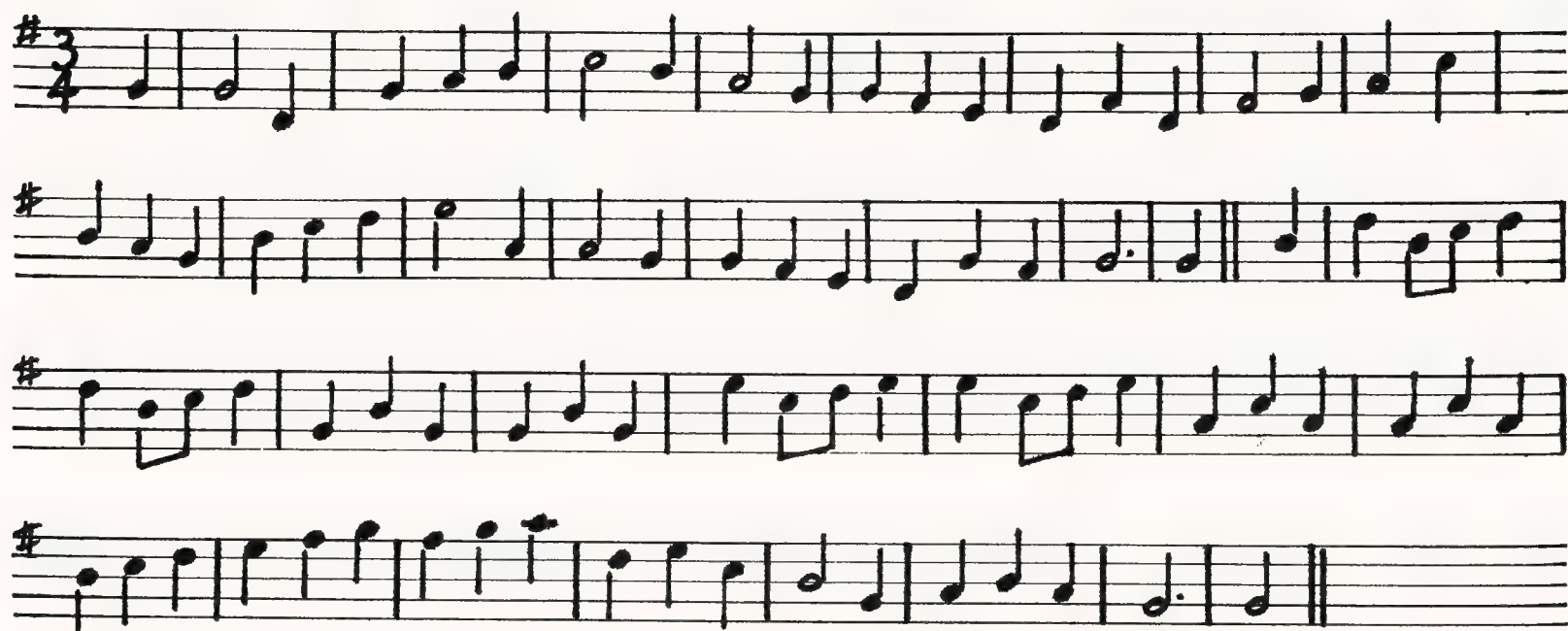




## OCAROLAN TUNES

Fanny Power

16



Planxty Drury

17





## HORNPIPES

### The Fairies

18



### O'Callaghan's

19





# POLKAS

20

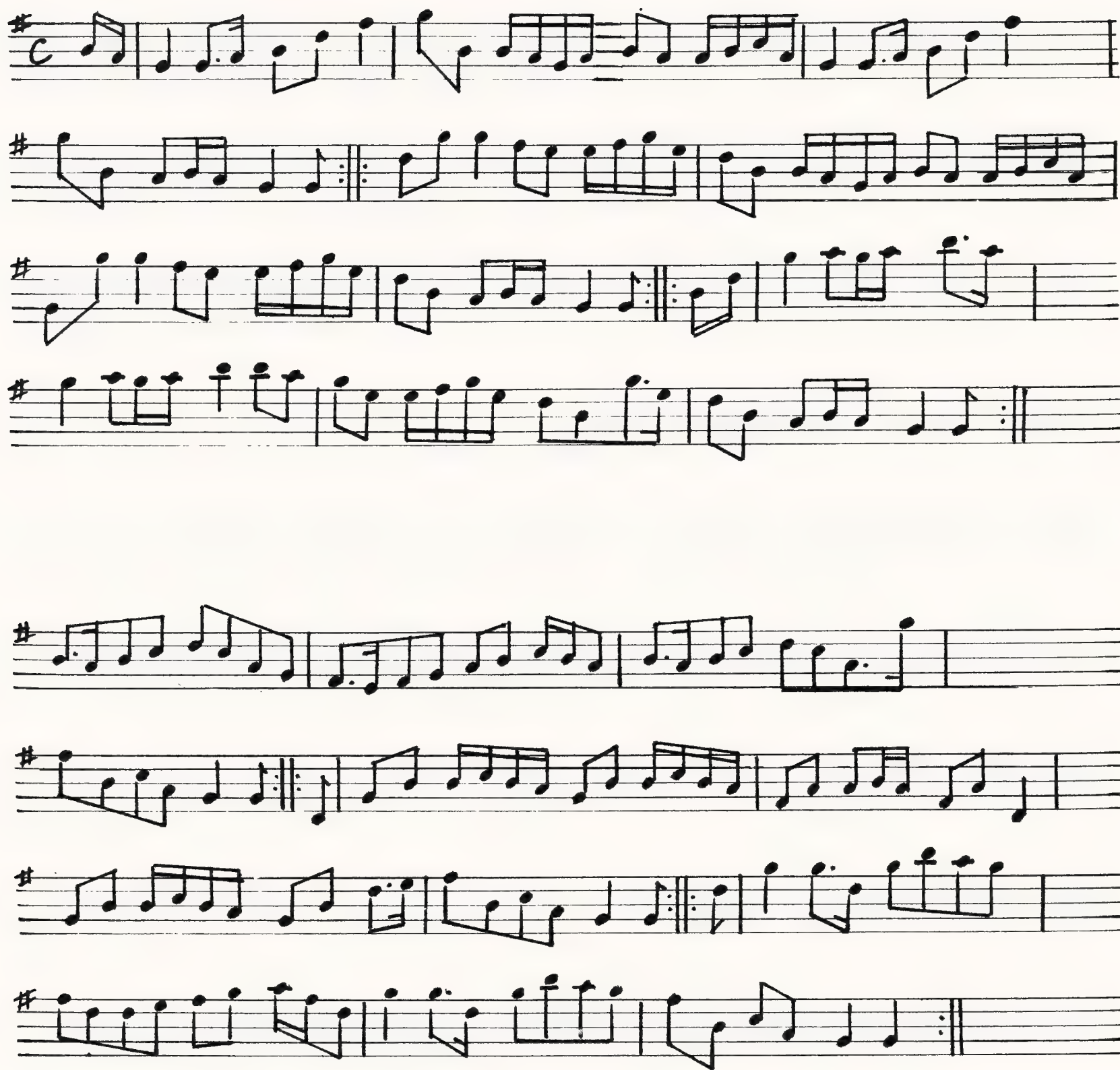
## Ballydesmond Polkas

The musical score for "Ballydesmond Polkas" is written in D major (two sharps) and 2/4 time. It consists of 12 staves of music, organized into four systems of three staves each. The notation includes various musical symbols such as treble clefs, key signatures, time signatures, and note values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and includes repeat signs and trill ornaments. The first staff begins with a common time signature 'C' followed by a sharp sign, indicating the key signature. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots on the final staff.



# Knocknabower Polkas

21





# REELS

## Abbey Reel

22



## Road To Lisdoonvarna

23



## Boy In The Boat

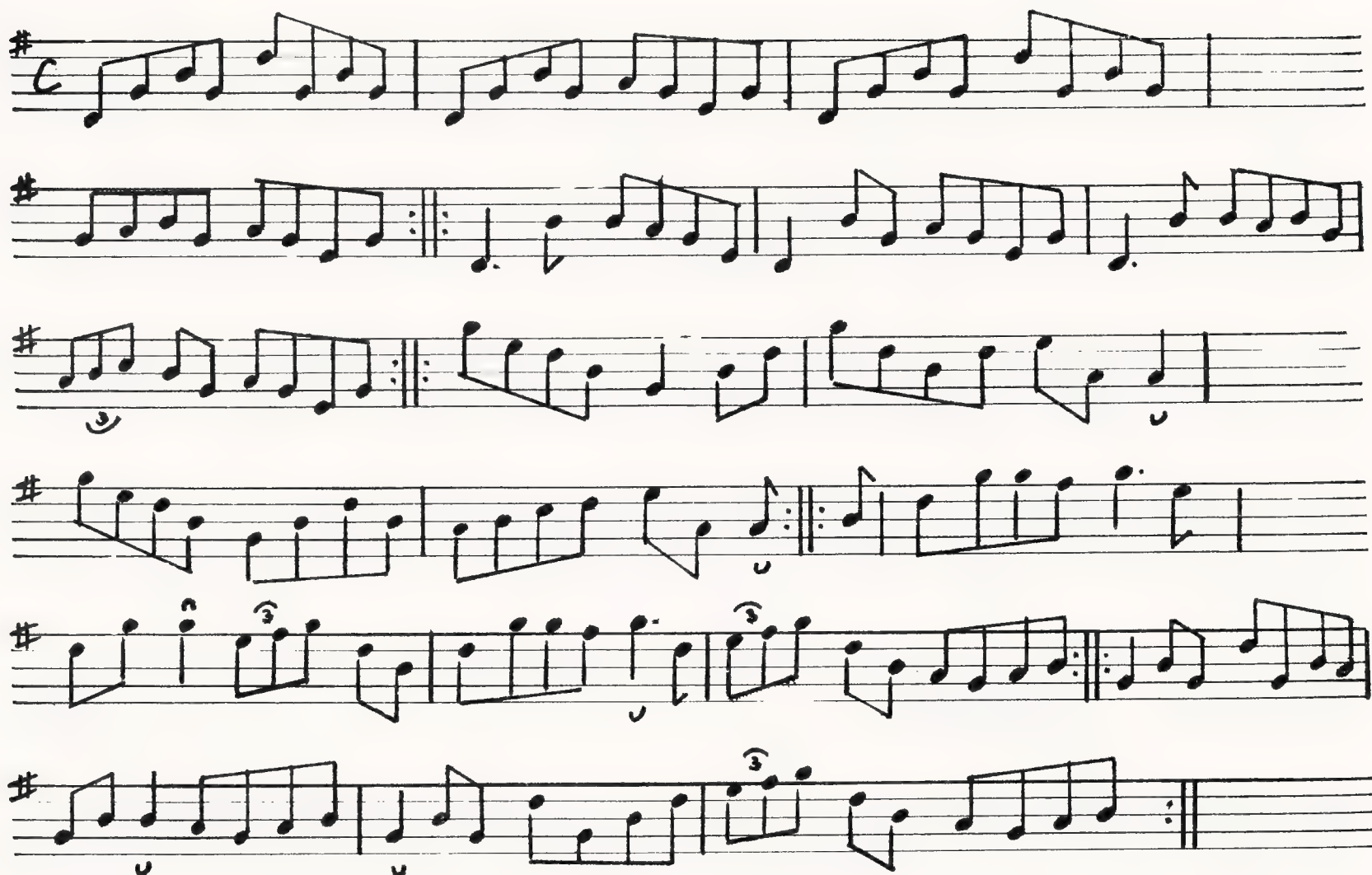
24





## Foxhunter's

25



## Peg McGrath

26





Kilavel Fancy

27



Four staves of musical notation for the piece 'Kilavel Fancy'. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a sharp sign. The second staff has a sharp sign and a common time signature. The third and fourth staves also have sharp signs. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Tommy Peoples

28



Four staves of musical notation for the piece 'Tommy Peoples'. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notation includes various note values, rests, slurs, and fingerings (indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3). The first staff begins with a treble clef and two sharp signs. The second staff has a sharp sign and a common time signature. The third and fourth staves also have sharp signs. The piece concludes with a double bar line.







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28

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